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General and complete disarmament

Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 69/55, entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control", the General Assembly invited all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General information on the measures they had adopted to promote the objectives envisaged in that resolution, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing that information to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 2 February 2015, a note verbale was sent to all Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received thus far are contained in section II. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[21 April 2015]

Cuba stresses the need to observe environmental norms in all aspects of public life, including in the drafting and implementation of disarmament and arms control treaties.

Cuba ensures strict observance of environmental norms, including in the implementation of instruments to which it is a party, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Protecting the environment and natural resources is a high priority for Cuba, which has developed robust legislation that is enforced strictly by the competent bodies, including those responsible for implementing international disarmament and arms control obligations at the domestic level.

Cuba has many instruments to ensure environmental protection in the implementation of disarmament and arms control treaties and conventions to which it is a party, including:

- Article 27 of the Constitution, which refers to the concept of sustainable development
- Act No. 81/1997 on the environment, which sets forth the principles underpinning the country's environmental policy
- Legislative Decree No. 207 on the use of nuclear energy, which establishes the general rules in this area
- Decree No. 208 on the national system of accounting for and controlling nuclear material, which establishes the norms for the system, with the aim of ensuring the efficient management of nuclear material and the detection of any unauthorized use, loss or movement of such material

- The legal framework governing biosecurity and the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention, which is reflected in Legislative Decree No. 190/99 on biosafety, Decision No. 2/2004 of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, the regulations for accounting for and controlling biological materials, equipment and related technologies; the most recent update of the list of biological agents that affect people, animals and plants; and the regulations for biosafety certification, which are contained in Decisions Nos. 38/2006 and 180/2007, respectively, of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment
- Legislative Decree No. 202/1999, which governs the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention at the domestic level
- Decision No. 5517 of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers of 2005, on contraventions resulting from violation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which rounded out the legislative measures needed to implement the Convention.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction and their ongoing development and potential use are among the most serious threats to international peace and security, to the fragile environmental balance on our planet, and to sustainable development for all peoples without distinction.

The only truly effective solution for preventing the dire consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction is their total elimination.

Relevant environmental norms must be duly taken into account in international disarmament forums during the negotiation of international treaties and agreements on disarmament and arms control.

The Chemical Weapons Convention continues to be the only international agreement that provides for the verifiable destruction of weapons of mass destruction and the facilities where they are produced, and for the protection of humans and the environment.

Considering the more than 16,000 nuclear weapons that currently threaten the survival of the human race and the constant risk of death and destruction of the environment that would be posed by the use of just one hundred of those weapons, Cuba reiterates its call to begin without further delay negotiations for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame and under strict international control. A comprehensive treaty on nuclear disarmament must of necessity include environmental protection measures.

A legally binding and multilaterally negotiated protocol to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention is essential to protecting the environment and preserving the biodiversity of our planet.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[3 June 2015]

The National Naval Aviation Service of the Republic of Panama, as a law enforcement entity under the Ministry of Public Safety, is responsible for protecting

the lives, honour, property and rights and freedoms of persons under the State's jurisdiction, maintaining law and order, preventing criminal acts, and protecting the air and maritime spaces, navigable waterways, continental shelf and rivers and lakes of the Republic of Panama, while respecting the rule of law, democracy and human rights.

The National Naval Aviation Service of Panama therefore condemns in the strongest terms all forms of domestic and international terrorism, by whoever and by whatever means committed, and expresses its firm resolve to cooperate in the effort to prevent and combat terrorist acts, in the light of its commitment to peace and international security. Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are measures that all countries must take for international stability.

Panama does not possess, import, handle or store weapons of mass destruction or nuclear weapons of any kind.

The current range of international agreements, conventions and regimes on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the international implementation measures taken by each country reflect the political will and the specific capacity of countries to join the efforts of the international community to combat the scourge of the spread of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

Such multilateral agreements are clear examples of an effective and responsible multilateral effort in which all States had been involved, albeit for different reasons, some because they possessed those weapons, and others because they were able to develop and produce them.

In addition, the acquisition of technology in international markets has been a necessity for developing countries that aim to promote their scientific and technological development. Since they acquire goods and services from knowledge- and technology-exporting countries, they invariably need to have a policy of transparency that provides assurances as to the peaceful nature of their scientific and technological endeavours involving dual-use equipment.

Portugal

[Original: English]
[24 April 2015]

At its sixty-ninth session, the General Assembly, recalling the previous resolutions adopted on that issue, reaffirmed the importance of the observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons. In that context, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/55, recognizing the importance of the adoption by the States of measures that ensure environmental progress, in the context of international security.

Portugal has adopted the highest standards regarding environmental protection and pollution prevention. Moreover, best-practice guidelines as well as recommendations from the relevant international organizations have been translated into national legislation, particularly the environmental directive for national defence, dated 19 April 2011. Furthermore, Portugal fully complies with European Union law concerning environmental norms.

The Portuguese armed forces, in theatres of operations, comply with the most environmentally protective or favourable provisions enshrined either in the Portuguese legislation or in that of the host country.

In addition, Portugal is party to all major disarmament and non-proliferation conventions. In compliance with its international obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Portugal has disposed of or destroyed its stock of, inter alia, cluster munitions and landmines and, in doing so, fully respected applicable environmental norms, which include standards agreed by the members of the European Union in Council directive 94/67/EC on the incineration of hazardous wastes.

Being party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention requires from Portugal control measures that are either fully in place or being implemented, thus contributing to environmental safety and security.

In addition, Portugal complies with such norms when destroying firearms that are found or seized by police forces. The procedures followed to destroy them are described in more detail in the Report of Portugal to the International Tracing Instrument of the United Nations and in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Portugal is a State signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 31/72 on 10 December 1976, in which the States parties to that Convention recalled the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972, and it remains ready to proceed with its ratification.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[14 April 2015]

Qatar does not possess any weapons that affect or are detrimental to the environment.

Qatar endorses and supports the international agreements on disarmament and arms control.

Qatar's Environmental Protection Act sets out upper limits for emissions and concentrations of pollutants in water, soil and the air.

The Armed Forces Office of the Environment ensures that all Armed Forces activities comply with environmental standards.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[29 May 2015]

In Spain, the environmental norms of the European Union, which have been incorporated into Spanish law and are consequently binding, serve as the benchmark for environmental management.

Spain continues to follow the procedures described in reports of previous years for the destruction of weapons and ammunition in the implementation of the main disarmament and arms control agreements to which it is a party. Below are the highlights of each of these procedures.

Destruction of anti-personnel mines

The destruction of anti-personnel mines was carried out by the Spanish company Fabricaciones Extremeñas, which guaranteed maximum safety and zero environmental impact, in conformity with ISO-14000 standards and European Union Council Directive 94/67/EC on the incineration of hazardous waste. In all, 849,365 mines were destroyed in a record period of 28 months.

Destruction of conventional weapons (Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe)

In the case of Spain, 371 battle tanks and 87 artillery pieces had to be destroyed; the process was completed on 16 November 1995. Currently, further reductions are being made to offset the commissioning of new equipment and to ensure that the limits laid down in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe are not exceeded.

Destruction of small arms and light weapons

Spain also observes environmental norms with regard to the destruction of small arms and light weapons, as set out in the document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on such weapons.

Destruction of cluster munitions

In accordance with the ISO 14001:2004 standard and European Union Council Directive 94/67/EC, Spain has destroyed all cluster munitions supplied to its armed forces, with the exception of those retained for development and training, pursuant to article 3, paragraph 6, of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Between December 2008 and December 2014, 1,150 ESPIN-21 mortar grenades, 1,923 MAT-120 mortar grendades, and 588 CBU-100, 38 CBU-99 B and 410 BME-330 B/AP aerial bombs were destroyed.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[9 June 2015]

The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine and the State Emergency Service of Ukraine implementing the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects have carried out a number of demining activities in Ukraine.

In 2014, pyrotechnic units of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine found, defused and destroyed more than 151,100 explosive devices. A total area of about

3,030 hectares was cleared, including humanitarian demining on the territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions liberated from terrorist groups.

Compliance with international and Ukrainian environmental legislation is the basis for planning and the implementation of the international obligations of Ukraine on the utilization of anti-personnel mines PFM-1 and solid rocket fuel for intercontinental ballistic missiles SS-24.

Among existing disposal methods (burning, blasting, machine cut, cryogenic extraction, chemical destruction, hydro-extraction) for disposal of ICBM SS-24 solid rocket fuel, Ukraine selected hydromechanical extraction from rocket shells engines with subsequent processing of the extracted fuel in industrial emulsion explosives.

This technology allows for extracting and processing fuel without any emissions into the atmosphere, water or soil. Replacing TNT-containing explosives with emulsion explosives follows modern practice.

PFM-1 (1C) anti-personnel land mines and waste from extraction and processing of solid rocket fuel are destroyed in a specially engineered and equipped facility. That unit is equipped with the latest systems for afterburning, filtering and neutralizing harmful solid and gaseous emissions, preventing the release of such emissions into the environment.

The empty shell engines disposal unit, built at the plant with assistance of the United States of America and designed by the German company Eisenmann, is also equipped with systems for afterburning, filtering and neutralizing harmful solid and gaseous emissions.

The hazard level of solid material formed after disposing of the SS-24 solid rocket fuel and PFM-1 anti-personnel mines allows the usage of such waste in the construction of buildings and roads.

As a result of the activities of terrorist groups and the aggression of the Russian Federation, a significant portion of the liberated territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, with a total area of about 7,000 km^2, is contaminated with explosive devices and requires humanitarian demining.

The humanitarian demining of settlements, power, gas, heat and water supply units and social sector properties is performed as a first priority in the territories liberated from terrorist groups.

Within the framework of international cooperation in the field of humanitarian demining, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine continues to implement joint projects with the Project Coordinator of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Ukraine, for example on increasing the technical capacity of the Government of Ukraine for the underwater clean-up of Black and Azov Sea areas from explosive remnants of war, or on assistance to the Government of Ukraine for the rehabilitation of areas contaminated by explosive remnants of war and as a result of emergency situations in places of storage of ammunition. It also implements jointly with the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine a project on assistance to respond to contamination by explosive remnants of war and remnants of rocket fuel components. The joint Ukraine-North Atlantic Treaty Organization project on providing support for humanitarian demining in Ukraine has been launched.